

A VISIT TO THE WESTERN GOLD-FIELDS.

[FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.]

THE plains of Merredine, bounded to the south by the forehills which terminate the steep descents from the table-land, extend to that point where the waters of the Merredine mingle with those of the Cudgong; from thence the united streams, following the windings of a deep but narrow valley, pursue a north-westerly course for about twenty-five miles, whence they form a junction with the Macquarie in such a manner as to create a doubt whether the Macquarie receives the Cudgong, or the Cudgong receives the Macquarie. On the southern bank contracted undulating flats stretch from the margin of the river to the base of the plateau, which presents the appearance of a continuous range of lofty mountains broken here and there by some deep gorge, through which the streams, swollen by one of those thunderstorms which are of such frequent occurrence in the Alpine regions, come rushing from the heights with short lived but resistless force, until they reach the flats, across which they glide to the main stream. On the northern bank lower ranges descend more gently from their dome-like crests, on whose broad slopes the sombre hues of an Australian forest contrast with occasional patches of bright green sward. The dry road to Burdendong follows the sinuosities of the valley—here passing under shady clumps of oak along the margin of the stream, and there winding over some rocky spur which, stretching from the mountains to the river, diverts its course. These elevations are of the usual schistose character, but the schists have become less argillaceous, and more arenaceous, and consequently coarser. Porphyritic dykes are now and then exhibited in denudation at the base of the slopes, and in their neighbourhood outcrops, or bosses, of quartz rock are of frequent occurrence, covering the surrounding surface with their fragments. These rocks are not auriferous; they contain little or no iron, either in the form of an oxide or pyrites, and are possibly nothing more than a transmutated sandstone. However, true veins are also to be found descending the hills and following the crown of the ridges until they dip into the stream; these can easily be distinguished by their casing, their crystallisation, and the presence of sulphur of iron on either side of the quartz, but more generally on the lower side of the dip, in auriferous reefs usually accompanied by particles of gold. Where these reefs or veins occur the points of the elevations are thickly scattered with their debris. Particles of gold have been picked up on the surface, and the bed of the river in their vicinity has been worked by the Chinese, with indifferent success; at present, one small party are located near an abandoned sheep station, about five miles below Merredine, and are the last to be found on the Cudgong. Having been informed that a path over the mountains would shorten the journey to Burdendong by fifteen miles, leaving the road, I directed my course up a valley, and following a beaten track, ascended the great range with difficulty. On the summit I observed that a dozen different paths led off in as many directions. In vain I sought for the print of a horse's hoof, or a human foot, nothing was to be seen but cattle-tracks, and these were on all sides. Selecting one, a little east of south, and believing that it would conduct me to the Macquarie, I pursued it for hours through scrub, across valleys, over mountains, and along the margin of deep ravines which became more intricate as I proceeded; at last the track terminated at a cattle camp, pleasantly situated, no doubt, for one of the bovine species, but not by any means the place in which one of the genus homo would desire to pass the long cold hours of a winter's night. Marking the path, I ascended one of the highest hills in the neighbourhood, and from the summit nothing met my view but a wilderness of mountain tops. On the opposite side a fearful ravine, stretching away to the south-west, impeded further progress. Following its course upwards, in the hopes of finding a crossing-place, I traversed many creeks and gullies falling into it, some of considerable length, in all of which were deep waterholes full to the brim. Herds of wild cattle were frequent, which generally scampered off at my approach to the side of some hill, where they stood staring at the intruder; the country here was crossed by immense quartz dykes, and reefs, and the entire surface was strewn with their fragments. There is no part of the plateau where this formation occurs in greater abundance; large veins were to be seen on all sides descending the slopes to the watercourses. Having arrived over a perpendicular fall of three or four hundred feet into the ravine, I found the main channel above it rocky, but of easy access, and well supplied with water-holes, but there was then no running stream; the auriferous indications continued in full force, the country more open; and the watercourses, being of more gradual descent, contained a deep body of detritus in their channel. Here, lighting a fire, I made myself at home for the night—not in solitude, for the wild bulls made the hills re-echo with their bellows until nearly daylight. Rising with the sun, I continued on the trail along the margin of the creek, which I began to hope would terminate at some out-station. Here kangaroos might be seen in flocks, bounding across the little flats; they were so numerous that a couple of good rifles would bring down a dray load in a few hours. The path along the creek conducted me not to a hut but to an old horse-trap, which did not appear to have been used for many years, as both posts and rails were mouldering and decayed. Here, deeming discretion the better part of valour, I determined to retrace my route, and, on my return, with a knife and pint-pot, prospected several of the ravines and gullies I had passed the day previous; in every instance I obtained grains of gold. All these watercourses are auriferous, and many of them would remunerate the labour of the digger. Water is to be found in the numerous water-holes, and, from the formation of the country, intersected by the deep ravine, it is probable that it would be found to contain accumulations of the precious metal in places favourable for its deposit. That I was not many miles distant from the Macquarie was evident from the broken character of the country. With the exception of quartz, there were none of the usual igneous formations exhibited on my route, and the arenaceous schists were uniform in their stratification, with the prevailing dip of the district. Towards the afternoon I was again overlooking the plains of Merredine, and, upon descending to the encampment, could find no person that knew anything of the district, nor any person who was willing to venture so far from the stores in search of that gold which all professed so much anxiety to obtain: from what I could learn, I had been on the western extremity of the Kangaroo Ground.

Having found a gentleman about to visit

Burdendong, we started the next morning, and this time struck the right trail, which took a direction at a right angle with my previous track. The crown of a long spur conducted us to the summit of a lofty narrow range trending to the north-west, and here ten miles of a track over a succession of ascents, descents, rocks, and sidings, took us to a gap where a beaten path down the southern face of the mountain points out the road to the diggings. On the right hand the narrow basin of the Cudgong lay far beneath—its tortuous windings may be traced for miles, and the sheer of its bright waters can be distinguished at intervals glittering like a streak of molten silver through the dense foliage of the forest. On the left, the eye wanders over the broad valley through which the Macquarie pursues its long and lonely journey to the regions of the far west. The view is bounded to the S.W. by the Mullion range, above which the distant Canobolas raise their heads, and to the N.W. by the Canobeyna Hills and the ranges beyond the Bell River. Nearer hand, in the valley, wide openings in the forest, and bald hills, and grassy plains, present an appearance of cultivation that does not exist, and I afterwards found that three publicans, a solitary stockman, and a few diggers, comprised almost the entire population of a large portion of the lovely district that lay spread out before me. The descent from the summit is somewhat too steep to be agreeable to either man or horse; but below that long spur shoot out from the forehills and benches, and gradually subside into the plains that border the river.

About half way down the range you arrive at a broad bench or steppe, intersected by the Devil's Hole Creek, which, having its source in the range to the eastward, follows the base of the main chain for a short distance, and then, sweeping round and forcing a passage through the lower hills and ridges, enters the plains. A few hundred yards from the point where it breaks from the ridges several strata of a compact calcareous schist are exhibited on the northern bank; their dip to the west is scarcely perceptible, and they appear to have been but little disturbed. On the opposite bank a low ridge of arenaceous schist, covered with fragments of quartz, sinks into the stream. From the source to this spot the creek has been much worked, and has yielded a vast quantity of gold, but lower down its auriferous character ceases. It may also be remarked that no gold has been found in the country between the northern bank and the main range; this stream may therefore be said to form the north-western boundary of the Burdendong mining district. The highest portion of the creek on the bench is known as the upper diggings. This locality has been very productive; now, with the exception of two parties profitably employed panning the old ground, the whole creek is deserted. It was originally worked by Europeans, but the traces of recent Chinese encampments are to be observed scattered along the banks, and the fact of these people having departed is a conclusive evidence that the gold has departed also.

THE WAGNER FORGERIES.

[From the Times, July 15.]

THE Wagner gang, just convicted at the Old Bailey, were social enemies, almost respectable from the magnitude of their operations and the artistic resources developed in their attacks upon their natural victims, the banking community of this metropolis. The history of their lives reads more like a chapter from "The Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties," or an account of the stages of invention which produced our present steam-engine, than like the process of robbing a banker of £265. The most patient labour, the most careful tracking of occult truths, the most open-eyed observation of trifling indications, the qualities which have given statues and immortal names to Harvey and Watt and Stephenson, seemed to have been possessed and exercised by William Wagner, Robert Humphreys, William Wynne Bramwell, William Whitehead Chandler, and Andrew Foster. Their process was indeed the reverse of that which is employed by the benefactors of mankind; their business was to shut out light, not to create it, to walk in darkness and to erase their footprints as they trod; but the qualities of mind developed by the philosophers and the swindlers are almost equally rare. Wagner and his confederates elevated forgery to the dignity of a science, and pressed into its service all the fine arts that could aid in its advancement. Imitative penmanship, engraving, die-sinking, personation of the finest acting, and little romances flowing from imaginations always fruitful, and composed with the most minute attention to social probabilities and to the unities of time and place, were all lavished upon the design of doing one false act in the face of day, before the practised eyes of men trained to examine that act, and to invest it with such a character of truth that it should pass unchallenged and leave no track behind it. It is a great feat in the progress of civilization. It is a strong contrast to the clumsy crowbar and horse-pistol system of ruder times. To a mere tyro in swindling it might seem an easy thing to forge a cheque and receive the money for it; but Wagner and his friends knew that to do this with any certainty of success and after impunity is of the highest order of difficulty. Ten years of meditation over a previous miscarriage had taught the master forger the arduous nature of his calling. If he failed, he failed as Caesar Borgia failed, by an unfortunate error in the objects upon whom he exercised his treachery and his confidence.

The machinery of Wagner was bent with years and infirmities, who had passed his long life in the laborious acquisition of a facility in imitating other men's signatures. The talent had not fructified in his possession; for we find him living in a miserable lodging and in a single room, always engaged in writing, and by no means in possession of those advantages which so absolute a power over the signatures of all the bankers and all the money-dealers of the city of London would appear likely to confer. The talent of Old Kerp was the raw material of Wagner's machinery. There is a sect among the Chinese who make it a religious duty to search for scraps of writing and to consume them by fire. Perhaps the Chinese, who invented everything, have had Wagner among them, and founded the sect in order to keep down the Wagners, just as mice may be said to be the propagators of the race of cats. But Wagner, at any rate, was industrious in the collection of autographs. Wagner was more careful in preserving the letter of his lightest acquaintance than the Countess of Osborn was in laying up a note from Horace Walpole. When Mr. Fellowes, a solidly entered into a correspondence with Robert Humphreys as to the terms of a projected lease, Wagner carefully put the letter by; and when Dr. Jones wrote a note about some equally common subject Wagner remarked that "it would come in nicely by-and-

bye. These precious signatures and scraps of writing were taken to Kerp, and that industrious old man laboured at them as models until he had acquired the power of perfect imitation. The next and obvious step was to utilize this power by writing a false order for the passbook of the person whose signature was intended to be falsified, for the purpose of knowing for what balance they might safely draw. Then came the engraving of the cheque, and as it would not be quite safe to send the blank to Somerset-house to be stamped, and as it was as well to avoid even the slight suggestion of a suspicion which might possibly arise from the fixing of an adhesive stamp, a die of the cheque stamp was perfected after many trials, and the instrument being filled up by Kerp, and the signature neatly forged, the fraudulent instrument might be supposed to be complete. A money mind would have been satisfied, but not so Wagner. We must suppose that Kerp, although the master penman, and therefore necessary to the work of giving the true style to the handwriting of the body of the cheque, had his scholars among Wagner's friends. Why should Wagner throw away any part of the booty upon this old man? His pupils, Bateman and Chandler, could copy the forgery with sufficient skill, and when the copies had been made Kerp's original forgery was taken back to him with "no effects" written upon it. Thus was the old forger cheated out of all share in the produce of his original work.

The next point, and the most difficult of all, was the realization of the amount. The presentation of the cheque is to the forger what the moment of projection is to the alchemist. It often passed easily and prosperously; but there are operations which do not become more facile on repetition, and it was necessary not only to provide for the honest division of the proceeds in case of success, but also for the escape of the agent in the eventuality of failure. When, for instance, the confederates had just obtained £440 for a cheque originally forged by poor Kerp, but copied and presented by Chandler, it was probable that the face of the gentleman who arranged that transaction at the counter would be likely to dwell upon the memory of the cashier. It was easier to produce cheques than to find fresh agents to cash them; and this was the weak point in Wagner's system. Wagner addressed himself to this difficulty with his accustomed ingenuity. The agent was always provided with proof that he was himself the trusting and innocent victim of some untraceable counterfeiter. The preparation for this purpose was highly artistic. First the intended agent inserted an advertisement in a newspaper for occupation. To this advertisement he received an answer, from an appointment to meet the intended employer at a coffee-house, or at some suddenly-taken lodging. The agent kept the appointment, and there was met by the disguised confederate who was to bear the onus of the possible discovery. The meeting was made as publicly as possible, and the endeavour was that the landlord and waiters should be able to swear distinctly to the identity of the agent, but should know nothing of the disguised confederate. Thus, if the dreaded catastrophe should happen—if the agent should be stopped at the Bank—his innocence was evident. He advertised for employment, a sharper answered his advertisement, met him at a coffee-house, and sent him to change the cheque. The letters of the advertisement, and the perfectly true evidence of the waiters, beat out this tale, the agent goes scot free, and the only result of the failure is the loss of the forged cheque. Other precautions were, of course, taken upon the "Quis custodiet custodes" principle. The agent was to be watched lest he should run off with all the money; and, as it was better that he should be watched by persons whom he could not identify, he was placed at the corner of a street while those who were to watch him passed among the crowd and made themselves acquainted with his features.

This is the Wagner system as it has just been developed during three days of investigation at the Central Criminal Court. Its theory was perfect, but it slightly failed in practice. The forgeries ought to be as much above suspicion as Caesar's wife; but the ingenious deception put upon Old Kerp had probably rendered the imitations less perfect than those his cunning hand had prepared. The theory requires that the confederate who acts the swindler at the coffee-house should be untraceable; but Wagner played the part himself, and was traced; and, lastly, the working of all machinery requires coherency of action and proper test of materials; but Wagner was entrapped by a journeyman baker, whom he had tempted and trusted without sufficient test, and he was denounced by an accomplice. This ingenious man had been working in full security of being in utter darkness, when he was all the time living and moving under the bull's-eye of a detective policeman. Wagner and Bateman, the two principal authors of this great assault upon all commercial confidence, are now sentenced to penal servitude for life. May we promise the bankers and merchants of London that the career of these criminals is closed? It is very difficult to say what the future may be. Both these men were once forger convicted of crimes as grave as those for which they are now under sentence; and if their punishment had been carried out the losses they have now occasioned would not have occurred. They were, however, both let out. The usual story was told upon the trial. They received tickets of leave, and, armed with the recommendation of the chaplain of the gaol and Colonel Jebb, the Prison Inspector, they were, after a comparatively short imprisonment, let loose again to seek their prey. If some system had been adopted whereby credulous chaplains and tender-hearted Prison Inspectors were made responsible for the damage suffered by innocent men at the hands of the ruffians they unleash, we should not now have to tell the fate of William Wagner, or to condole with the bankers upon the free exercise of his pernicious ingenuity.

THE DUPLICITY OF LOUIS NAPOLEON.

[From the Saturday Review.]

It is almost exactly four years since London turned out to welcome and honour the Emperor and Empress of the French. They were the idols of the hour—the loveliest of crowned heads—he, our noble, sagacious, unselfish ally. Royalty smiled on them, the city feasted them. Ministers bowed to them, the ground before them, the mob cheered them. It seemed as if England had never done enough to show her gratitude and admiration. Here was the Saviour of Society, the Apostle of Peace, the scourge of unscrupulous Russia, come over in person that English eyes might feast on his blessed sight, and pay her feeble tribute to his greatness and goodness. Only a few dissentients ventured in secret to question whether all this was really deserved. They could not forget the history of France, or the history of Louis Napoleon, simply because they saw the Sovereigns of the two countries sitting together

in a carriage, and French and English flags waving side by side at Guildhall. They asked whether the successful leopard could have so completely changed his spots as was supposed. They distrusted the man, and they distrusted his system. They knew that from his youth up he had been a conspirator. Intrigues, plots, treachery had been his daily occupation for twenty years. He had very recently subverted a Government which he had sworn to protect. He had capoled the National Assembly of France by protestations so solemn and so frequent that even the most wary had been thrown off their guard. Why, then, should it be presumed that he had all at once discarded the habits of a lifetime, and changed his character at one twist from black to white? A time must come when the system he represented would bring him into collision with England. For Napoleonism can never stay still. Either it must go on encroaching, or it must itself perish. To encroach on every side where liberty exists, is the first instinct of a despot; and to encroach on English liberty had been as the great purpose of his life. While, therefore, they accepted his alliance for a particular and a temporary purpose, those who knew him and his policy were anxious that they should be cautious, and that the friendship he extended to him should be of that modified kind which never forgets that a friend may one day be an enemy.

When the Crimean war was over, these feelings gained ground. The mode in which the war was ended was not very satisfactory to us, and our ally seemed bent rather on making a good thing out of it for himself than on securing the objects for which it had been undertaken. France and Russia appeared to be unaccountably good friends, and England had to look to Austria for support in demanding that Russia should not be permitted, when beaten, to do what she had been refused while she was still unconquered. Then came all the singular history of last year—the Congress, Cherbours, and the Portuguese business.

Ordinary men, though they are a strange way of cultivating the English alliance, and the unpleasant conviction forced itself on many minds, that a man who had deceived every one he had to deal with might be audacious and villainous enough to deceive England also. But this feeling was always discountenanced in official quarters. The heads of both parties maintained the same language of timid adulation. It was very wrong to distrust any so faithful, honest, and peaceable, and who was so able to injure us if we offended him. The portion of the Press that gave warning of the danger was heartily abused. We speak from experience. Difficult as it is in modern times to be absolutely consistent for any length of time, we may venture to say there is no subject on which we have never been inconsistent. We have never creder in the opinion of Louis Napoleon. We have never ceased to utter that opinion; we have never hesitated to insist that the blind trust reposed in him by the successive Governments of this country was a certain source of future danger. But we are aware that this exposed us to much reproach. Where, it was asked, is the proof of his duplicity? It was certainly not easy to give a direct proof. When duplicity can be proved, it is at an end. There was nothing to rest on but the general induction from the character of the man, the inevitable tendency of his system, and the cruel and artful way in which he pressed the yoke tighter and tighter on his own subjects. We were obliged to wait till time should give us the sad satisfaction of seeing everything that had been said abundantly justified.

Now that the justification has come—now that England knows herself to be the victim of a long-contrived plot, and the object of a conspiracy threatening her with the greatest danger through which she has ever passed—it is hard to realise how completely we have been duped. It seems scarcely credible that we have been going on for months sending backwards and forwards all sorts of polite messages, proposing bases of negotiation, acting the part of a supremely comfortable and disinterested mediator and friend, while all the time our chief ally had in his pocket a treaty which can have no other object than to crush our power in the Mediterranean and the East. We look back, and see now what the game has really been—why Sardinia was put forward, why the *Montevideo* had been deemed with contradictory falsehoods, why Lord Cowley's amiable endeavours were cut short by the impracticable proposal of a Congress. But although all is clear as we look back, nothing can be more certain than that every one has been completely deceived. The suspicions of the English Government had been entirely set at rest, if indeed they ever existed. France was not arming—Lord Malmesbury could be certain of that. France had no War Budget. The Emperor expressly said in his speech to the Corps Legislatif, that he set the highest value on the English alliance. We therefore were perfectly safe. Even at the beginning of this week, Lord Derby had not a hint to give of the terrible change that was coming over the face of our European interests. Few Englishmen are suspicious, and even the habits of diplomacy and the atmosphere of Courts cannot make English gentlemen believe that they are in danger from fraud and treachery. Let Louis Napoleon have the credit of his success, such as it is. He has succeeded twice in his life in deceiving where deception would have seemed scarcely possible. He has hoodwinked England as he hoodwinked the National Assembly. One fine morning the Assembly woke, and found its doors closed, its leaders arrested, and the President of the Republic moving down its friends with grapeshot. One fine morning England woke, and found its faithful friend and sagacious ally banded with Russia to destroy it. At any rate we have now the comfort of knowing the worst. Our Second of December is over. No sane Englishman will henceforth attach the slightest value to the most solemn promise or most formal protestation of Louis Napoleon.

THE STOCK EXCHANGE PANIC.

[From the Morning Star, April 28.]

NEVER, since the political crash of 1848, was such a day known before in the London Stock Exchange as yesterday, either for the magnitude of the panic among its members, or its disastrous effects upon the value of all descriptions of stock and shares.

Closing prices on Tuesday rendered some hopes of peace, however ill-founded, with Consols at 94. The intelligence of yesterday seemed to transpire in such successive gradations of bad to worse, that nothing could stem the downward torrent. All were panic-stricken, and reaction was impossible. The offensive and defensive alliance between France and Russia, the rejection by France of the last proposal for English mediation, the address to the Legislative Corps, the war loan of £20,000,000, the

rumour of the crossing of the Ticino, and the landing of one part of the French forces at Genoa, and the advance of another towards Turin, constituted such an aggregate of misfortune, that the Stock Exchange found it impossible to resist, and nine of its members succumbed; in other words, they failed. The last news was that of a great fall, and a panic upon the Paris Bourse. Consols finally closed at 90½, or 3½ per cent. lower than yesterday. In railway shares the fall in some cases amounted to 5 per cent.; and Turkish Six per Cents., a very speculative stock, gave way no less than 20 per cent.

The news we have just mentioned as reaching the Stock Exchange, was as much in the shape of rumour as of fact, but we now come to facts. The French are in Turin. They entered the Savoy territory at a point near Culoz—they pushed along Mount Cenis—they are hastening into the Sardinian capital. The French are also in Genoa itself. Austria has accepted the mediation offered by England, and has not crossed the Ticino; but France has rejected that mediation, and Austria will give the order to cross when she knows this fact, if the order has not already been given. The Sardinian forces at Pallanza have retired to Sesia, which is accounted for by the fact that, on the other side of the river, the Austrians have advanced from Varese. Novara, on the Sardinian side, has also been abandoned by the Piedmontese. The news of a Russo-French treaty of the 21st of this month is as much confirmed, but as yet we know nothing of its exact contents. Our Paris correspondent sends us additional details about the treaty of the partition of Italy, as concluded between France and Sardinia.

These, we say, are facts; let us now add another, equally unquestionable, namely, that it is France which has broken through the treaties of 1815, by passing, on their way to Turin, the Savoy territory at Culoz—that is to say, French troops have passed through that part of it which the treaties annexed to the neutral soil formed by Switzerland.

Everybody will pause to inquire what explanation can be given of events so weighty as these. We will allude to one explanation which has been laid before us by most respectable authority, though we do not adopt it as our own solution of the impending war. We are informed that the Emperor of the French first revealed his schemes to the Queen at Osborne. He proposed to the Queen that the pentarchy of the five Powers should be put an end to, and a triarchy of France, England, and Russia be established in its stead. The Queen rejected this suggestion in terms which expressed indignation. Louis Napoleon afterwards addressed himself to the Emperor Alexander, and the interview at Stuttgart took place. As we are told, the foundation was then laid of the present complicated state of affairs. It was resolved to destroy the dominion of Austria in Italy, as the means of cutting off her pretensions to be considered an European Power. Russia consented to this, as is suggested, partly by way of avenging herself upon Austria for her participation in the efforts that were made to drive Russia back from the Byzantine peninsula, and partly in order to render herself popular with the Italians, and thereby getting friends and a footing in the Mediterranean. The Grand Duke Constantine's journey, and the contract respecting Villa Franca, followed.

In continuation of such information as we have received, we may proceed to say that, as the present year was the one designed for action, the Emperor of the French rendered any retreat from his engagements impossible by the ominous remark he addressed to Baron Hubner on the 1st of January. The turmoil having thus fairly begun, Louis Napoleon demanded from Russia a treaty of a defensive nature, and as a guarantee of the good faith of Russia. This treaty was probably concluded two months ago, but the exact date or the exact contents are not known. Diplomatic circles have been only made aware of its existence within the last three weeks. Russia seems to have undertaken to have induced Prussia and the German Confederation to become neutral. As the Confederation, however, began to arm and prepare for the worst, Louis Napoleon again became suspicious of Russia, and insisted upon another treaty, containing guarantees against the action of the Confederation, a treaty offensive and defensive; and such is the treaty which was signed on Friday last.

Of course, reading the French Imperial utterances, as made yesterday through the Count De Morny, different impressions might be produced. In our leading article of yesterday we spoke of it in unambiguous terms. We had then known that it was not having failed, for a single day, in the exercise of moderate principles, and as having hastened to accept mediation. It is somewhat significant that the Count should have been instructed to say that the German Powers should have the wisdom to understand that this is not a European but an Italian question, which "conceals no plan of conquest, and can produce no revolutions." But this statement appears contemporaneously with the knowledge of the fact that France and Russia have entered upon an alliance which requires united action in a military point of view.

Our readers are aware that the news of a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between France and Russia, concluded on Friday last, was given to the public first by ourselves. In our leading article of yesterday we spoke of it in unambiguous terms. We had then known that it was not having failed, for a single day, in the exercise of moderate principles, and as having hastened to accept mediation. It is somewhat significant that the Count should have been instructed to say that the German Powers should have the wisdom to understand that this is not a European but an Italian question, which "conceals no plan of conquest, and can produce no revolutions." But this statement appears contemporaneously with the knowledge of the fact that France and Russia have entered upon an alliance which requires united action in a military point of view.

When we first were made acquainted with this startling circumstance, we threw such doubt upon it as was justified by the enormous responsibility which Russia incurs in taking that step, and the dangers she evidently exposes herself to. Further doubt, however, would now seem out of place. Yet we would fain warn the public against being too much alarmed by the enormous thundercloud which now seems to overshadow the whole horizon of Europe. In listening to this warning let them remember that it comes from the same quarter from which the first sign of alarm was given with so much accuracy. As we have said, we know not the exact purport of this offensive and defensive treaty. All we know is, that Russia has undertaken to concentrate four army corps on the frontiers of Germany, which are to act in case Germany acts. Does this mean that Russia will wage war against the German Confederation, in case the Federal troops invade France, or merely in case they are sent to Austria's assistance in Italy? Neither is at all a probable case.

PENSIONERS.—We are informed that there are no fewer at this moment than 90,000 pensioners, fit for service in defending the shores of their country from any attempt that might be made upon them. They could, we are assured, be organised and made available for duty in less than a week.

TREACHEROUS ALLIANCES AND PER-
FIDIOUS DESIGNS.

[From the Saturday Review.]

THE message of the Emperor to the Legislative body, as delivered by Count Walewski, attributes the crisis to the Austrian armaments which commenced in the winter. It is idle to argue with a disputant who suppresses the notorious fact that Austria only responded to the preparations which had been for many months proceeding in France. Early in the summer of 1858, just alarm was excited at Vienna; it was the course of the autumn, the details of the plan which has only been disclosed within the past week were currently discussed among well-informed politicians. In December last, the outlines of the conspiracy were described in our own columns, rather in the hope of suggesting inquiry to the Government than in the expectation of creating a conviction which could only have been justified by a collection of facts and arguments which it was then, on various grounds, impossible to publish. It was stated that France had determined on attacking Austria Italy, and that Russia had agreed to support the movement—at least so far as to place an army of observation on the eastern frontier of Germany. The proofs of the conspiracy would have been within the reach of any Minister so ought, for an hour, to have been trusted with the conduct of the Foreign Department. On the 1st of January, the French Emperor himself uttered one of those warnings which, on the eve of great convulsions, are generally used to stimulate the hopes of confederates, and to prepare an apology before-hand to meet inevitable charges of perfidious concealment. The English Government, in its obstinate blindness and deafness, has not kept its intelligence a single hour in advance of the most careless politician who glances at a newspaper in his leisure moments. The project had probably been discussed with Russia soon after the Congress of Paris, but the fright occasioned by the attempt of Orsini seems to have brought the design to a head. Count Walewski's suggestions of the obligations imposed by the family alliance of Louis supplies a characteristic excuse for a rupture which had been determined on while the Piedmontese Princess was still unaware of the bargain which was afterwards concluded at her expense. It is true that Prince Napoleon's marriage is closely connected with the war, but the relation which it bears to the rupture is not that of cause to effect.

There is little to be said on the profound wickedness of the conspiracy between France and Russia. The alliance which is now stated to exist must have been formed before either of the confederates had proclaimed the existence of any pretext for disturbing the peace. At the moment there is no ostensible ground of quarrel between Russia and Austria, for the possession of Poland can scarcely affect to engage in a crusade for the defence of Lombard nationality. The real offence of Austria consists in her neutrality, or rather in her leaning to the side of the Western Powers, during the Crimean war. The Emperor of the French urged the Cabinet of Vienna to press on the peace of which he stood in need, and he now profits by the recent alliance which was created by the Austrian compliance with his demands. It is scarcely worth while, however, to discuss the secondary motives which may have determined the policy of the allied aggressors. The war which is commencing is not a contest of feeling or a consequence of irritation, but a deliberate plot for the political and territorial aggrandisement of two unscrupulous potentates. Count De Morny's assertion, that the war was likely to be localised and limited, may be regarded as a superfluous flourish of misstatement intended to crown the long series of diplomatic perfidies. The junction of the two Imperial fleets in the Mediterranean could scarcely have affected the position of Austria, but the threatened naval co-operation in the Baltic is the best commentary on the assertion that "there is merely an Italian question, which conceals no plan of conquest, and can produce no revolutions." The insolence which commences the war with Austria by an ostentatious demonstration against England, corresponds to the shameful succession of falsehoods by which a friendly Government has been so long lulled into security. It is not satisfactory to know that, down to the present week, Lord Derby and his colleagues were still the dupes of France; but if it were necessary to make the choice, an honest man not ashamed of confessing incapacity, would, after all mishaps, rather be the victim than the Imperial traitor.

Only six weeks ago, the English ambassador at Paris was assured by the Emperor himself that his military preparations were confined to the replacement of the stores which had been expended in the Crimean campaign. Lord Malmesbury and Mr. Disraeli repeated the assertion in each House of Parliament within a month before the issue of a series of orders to the force which is now officially denominated the "army of the Alps" or "of Italy." The deliberate fraud which was practised in reference to the mission of Lord Cowley assumes a singularly offensive character now that it has become certain that the proposer of the Congress was acting in concert with France. In the Parliamentary conversation on the last night of the session, it was evident that the English Government felt that it had been trifled with; but no statesman could have suspected that Russia had already agreed to declare war against one of the parties whom she invited to assist her mediation. The assertions of *Moniteur* and the official speech in the Legislative Body may perhaps be regarded as conventional fictions; but the moral guilt of the assurances which deceived a friendly Government is proved by the fact that they effected their purpose, inasmuch as they were believed.

Whatever may be the duty or interest of England, it is scarcely probable that Germany will be allowed to exercise a choice between peace and war. The army of observation in Lorraine, the display of Russian forces on the Austrian frontier, and above all the offensive and defensive alliance of Denmark with France, confirm the suspicion that the scheme of conquest extends to the north as well as to the south of the Alps. At Tilisat also, Denmark was a party to the compact by which the first Napoleon and the last Alexander planned the partition of the world. The long-continued disputes between the German Powers and the Government of Copenhagen give an additional meaning to the recent agreement. It will be for the successor of Bernadotte to consider whether the conspirators have not followed the precedent of 1807, by promising the alienation of Norway in favour of their Northern allies. Russia has a grudge against Sweden for her treaty with the Western Powers during the recent war, and the French Court seems especially solicitous to betray its ally to punish every participant in the policy which it has wantonly abandoned. It cannot be expected that Denmark should remember that in 1850 Austria alone saved Holstein and Schleswig from a Prussian invasion. Within a few weeks it will probably appear that the re-partition of Scandinavia and of Italy

forms a university fleets in their squadrons over the Malta. George negro received Ionian concern sides enforce arm of for life which Italian Decem Imperi a solution question are ne Russian moment ne i picion If it inevit the fir remen opinion nation far some strugg will o The C that the n sympo found the moti trality should they must atten duly where oppo direct tipica busine rather contri fellow have their is b gene may gero too p main that, nation unne The by the sour man was ties, unal place sum that, leon by t and cep and tho des tax the new che act an ne wi to gra in it. V m trus fe the is i is w a c

[illegible][illegible]

GENTLEMEN'S WEAR.—Just arrived, per Mail of 7th inst.

Royal Oxford shoe
Ditto (arian ends) (a novelty)
Bordered and mixed toes
Needled and epidemic don ditto
Guinea, Oxford ditto
Russet cambric ariel ditto
Oxford cambric ariel ditto
Irish do ditto
The new patent perigay scarf, 3s black and colours
The new roman scarf
Bordered sural handkerchiefs
Pongees, India and china bannananas
Winger Lounging jackets
Fringed dressing gowns.

THOMPSON, SYMONDS, AND CO.

MERINOES.
Assorted colours,
2s. 6d. per yard, extra width.
Just opened by THOMPSON, SYMONDS, AND CO.
George and Barrack streets.

W. CALDERA.
Just received,
Halberdsaber, a well-assorted stock
Shirts, stock in white, black, and scarlet.
Whisker cloth, Victoria
Shirt bands, white, black, and drab
Opera fansels, white and coloured
Fancy dress tutters
Also, will be landed and exhibited TO-MORROW (Friday), a beautiful selection of Honiton, Limerick, and all other varieties of lace.
THOMPSON, SYMONDS, AND CO., George and Barrack streets.

W. CALDERA.
Messrs. THOMPSON, SYMONDS, AND CO. are receipt of the following assortment of choice goods for gentlemen's wear—
Dress and evening ties, in gauze, tissue, embroidered, Blouse, cravat, and gloves, &c., &c.
Dress shirts—plain and fancy fronts
Dress gaiters, 2s. 9d. per pair—white, straw, and lavender
Coats—Tasmanian, chester
Oxford frock
Fancy Milton
Melbourne riding.
Suits, in the latest two-piece
Halterine ditto
Shepherd's plaid.
Overcoats—Beaver rafter
Woolly talina
Sardinian cape.
Boys' and youths' clothing, in every fabric. Also,
Solid leather overcoats, numbers, 2s. per dozen
Best basit ditto
Registered folding ditto
Expanding coat bags
Embossed ditto
Travelling bags (fitted up).
THOMPSON, SYMONDS, AND CO., George and Barrack streets.

SELLING OFF, TAKING STOCK.
Bonnet Ribbons in great variety, only 6d. per yard.
Fancy Bonnets, all new shapes, 1s. 11d. each, worth 3s. 9d.
A beautiful assortment of trimmed bonnets, 6s. 9d. each.
Ladies' white cotton hose, 4s. 3d. per dozen.
French tulle dresses, 4s. 11d. each.
Fringed crinolines, all styles, 1s. 6d.
Puffin dresses, only 6s. 6d.
Wool plaid ditto, 6s. 11d.
Mohair ditto, 2s. 9d.
Satin dresses, very cheap
Swan down boas and trimming
Furs at half price.
The Hall, 204, Pitt-street, opposite the Theatre.
HENRY WELSH, late George Moore and Co.

LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S FELT HATS.
Head dresses, wreaths, and flowers in great variety.
Princess' rolls, all the new styles, very cheap
Fancy crinolines, numbers, 2s. per dozen
Josephine kid gloves, all sizes
India long cloth, for ladies' wear, very cheap
Bretels, bangles, shawls, and counterparts
Fancy neckties, every style, only 3s. 3d. per yard
Ladies' and children's mantles, cheap as usual
The new Alliance shawl, as worn in London, only
The Hall, 204, Pitt-street, opposite the Theatre.
HENRY WELSH (late George Moore and Co.)

KIDDERMINSTER CARPETING.
Printed drugget ditto, in squares and by the yard
Fancy room cloths, all styles, at reduced prices
Heath rugs, in great variety.
The Hall, 204, Pitt-street.
WELSH (late George Moore and Co.)

ACE GOODS, ex SALETTE.—W. C. PRESTON.
ACE and CO. have just opened ex Salette, a choice
assortment of Maltese and Honiton Laces, &c.; and they most
especially solicit the ladies of Sydney and the public to
call on them at the same place—Cavendish House,
next the Commercial Bank, George-street.

THE UNIVERSITY FESTIVAL.—We shall offer
during the present week a choice selection of new
and elegant Ribbons, richly adapted for morning
and evening wear, Ball Dresses, &c. In order to
meet the convenience of those who may desire it, a variety
of Skirts will be ready-made, at prices extremely low.
The Hall, 204, Pitt-street, opposite the Theatre.
W. C. PRESTON and Co., Cavendish House.

SPECIALLY ADAPTED FOR THE FESTIVAL.
Black real Spanish lace mantillas
Maltese and Honiton sets, ex Salette
Opera and evening cloaks and mantles
Rich silk robes, ready-made skirts.
W. C. PRESTON and Co., Cavendish House.

THE UNIVERSITY FESTIVAL.—LA VILLEGE PARIS.
We have just opened a new goods, just opened
Opera cloaks, white and colours, great variety
Wreaths and head dresses, direct from Paris
Mantles, culvercises, and gloves, all styles
Maltese collars and gloves, fancy colours.
Best Paris kid gloves, fancy colours, 2s. 9d. a pair
Gentlemen's light ditto, light colours, 2s. 9d. a pair.
Gentlemen's best wool Paris kid gloves, all styles.
WILLIAM PRICE, "La Ville de Paris."

CARPETS, FLOORCLOTHS!! CARPETS!!
PARKER and BATES are now offering splendid
assortment of the best carpet and floorcloths, at
reduced prices. Their carpet is made of the best
Wool, and is equal to any other carpet. This peculiar carpet is
made without spinning or weaving; the wear is equal to a
crushed carpet, and a yard and half wide. Our floorcloths,
being strong in the colony, the choicest pattern, and
at 2s. 10d. per yard. Kidderminster Carpets, 20s. 6d.
per yard, one yard wide. Carpets made and laid at 4d. per
yard.

N.B.—PARKER and BATES are holders of the Patent
Oxy Mating, made from the pure cocoanut; this matting
has obtained the prize medals of London, New York, and Paris
Exhibitions. This very strong matting is recommended to public
houses, being cheap and prevents any noise.
Just opened 1000 hearth rugs, 7s. 6d. to 12s. 6d. each.
Inlaid carpet and Floorcloth Warehouse, next Purkis
and Langer.

PARKER and BATES, sole proprietors.
No connection with any other house.

TEA, TEA, TEA.—The Congou, ex Henry Miller,
and the best black tea, ex the same ship, to be had at
MULROONEY'S, 23, South Head Road.

JOINT SHAREHOLDERS IN JOINT STOCK BANK FOR SALE.
EDWARD H. HERRING, Box 211.

FOR SALE, by the undersigned—
WINE AND SPIRITS, &c.

Cosmo's rule book
Ditto paper
Hunt's parts, in houghs and quarters
Ditto ditto, in casks
Spanish red wines
Genever, in case
C. V. P. brown brandy
Rum
Rass's No. 3 and 4
Byss's ale and portie, new brewing and label
ROBERTS, OLIPHANT'S STORES, &c.

Whymore's pick pickles
Hill and Lodgers' ditto
Hill's sauce
Whymore's berrings
Whymore's salad oil
Coleman's mustard
Ditto tomato blue
Kent and Sussex hops
New currents, just arrived
Muscat raisins.
PILAU PE, ex ARAN, in prime condition
METALS, &c.
Zinc patent sheathing metals, assorted
Sheet lead, 4, 5, 6, and 7 lb.
Tin plates, 16, 18, 19X.
Zinc, assorted
Scales.

LAMB, PARBURY, AND CO.

COALS, COALS, COALS.—Williamson's Wallend
Oaks, the best house coal in the colony, for SALE
the undersigned; also A. Co.'s Newcastle ditto,
at wood for stores, charcoal and breeze. ROBERT
BACON, BACON, Pinna mill-ford Colonial Bacon.
SOLOMONS, VINDIN, and CO., 12, Barrack-street.

300 CASKS PORTLAND AND ROMAN CEMENT
PLASTER; Fire Bricks, R. WYNNE, New
Barrack-street.

500,000 SLATES, cheap; Sheet Lead, cheap
Flanging, cheap. R. WYNNE.

CIRCULAR QUAY TIMBER YARD.
300,000 feet American pine, of every description
20,000 feet pitch pine, 1, 1 inch, 1, and 1 1/2 T. and G.
100,000 feet colonial hard pine, of every description, 1, 1 inch, 1, and 1 1/2 T. and G.
100,000 feet 10 inch Battie deals, every thickness and length
Shingles, saches, shirtings, architectures, moulding, in great
varieties, at greatly reduced prices.
W. H. ROPE.

[illegible]

ORSE
street
and
clock,
inter-
ly his
anal
es, and
ch the
oe, and

RT
au-
THIS
Here
Chloro
out of
in 1855

RT
Bazan
at 11 o
dry day
advice
and sin
pony,
near-lan
liberous
arches, c
private
arts, g

RT
their
raw bar
perfect

RT
au-
THE
having
art, ho
to town
rns He

R. CH
SAV
parties
anted
res, ot
—No r
ing or

L. CH
instr
on "re-
5 hand
and a g

L. CH
instr
great, on
high, p
or don't
mission

WDE
au-
as New

WDE
by M
TILIS
to as
on Til
ry chel
ed off
subject
nails
of 14; c
and d
letties
willow

GHA
na-bu-
the oc-
spare
beat
ive s
plot
stred
from
sing
Naa
ins, a
erge

WI
nat
Ma
re g
ugra
ary
TOC

ates
ehc
re
non
d w

